

Alpine Level 4 Ski Teacher

Technical Assessment Criteria



The following criteria are broken down under the headings of **Piste Performance (advanced parallel, short, medium/long and mixed turns), Bumps, Variable Conditions** and **Additional Activities**. **NB:** Please note that while Core Skier Development is not assessed during the technical exam at level 4 it is included as an assessable element during the level 4 teaching module.

These criteria set out what you, as potential level 4 teachers need to "Show" by the end of the course.

Overall Goal

Level 4 is the highest level in the IASI system and skiers who achieve this level will be **skillful** rounded skiers who are **adaptable** on all terrain.

PISTE PERFORMANCE ADVANCED PARALLEL TURNS: on steep red or black piste/terrain

Show

- steering round arcs using a blend of skills and pressure control to dictate speed and line.
- leaving two clear tracks wider than carving but with grip established above the fall line and managed through the turn.
- approx. 7 to 10 meter corridor.

PISTE PERFORMANCE SHORT TURNS: on steep red or black piste/terrain

Show

- short turns using a refined blend of the steering elements to produce rounded arcs with a high degree of ski performance. This will include the ability to grip (edge with pressure) above the fall line.
- rhythmic and flowing turns with good control of speed.
- the ability to change the impulse of pressure e.g., super smooth turns with grip above the fall line (slow and continuous pressure) to very punchy short turns (sudden impulse of pressure).
- the ability to vary the corridor fluidly, e.g. changing from very short turns to medium short turns (4m wide corridor).
- appropriate and functional blend of lateral and rotational separation depending on the corridor, speed and turn shape.



PISTE PERFORMANCE MEDIUM/LONG TURNS: on red piste/terrain

Show

- accurate carved medium/long turns leaving clean tracks in the snow with both skis and using appropriate range and rate of movement in the legs.
- continuous, progressive lateral movements.
- the ability to influence the turn shape (tighten the arc whilst carving).
- the ability to use both cross-under and cross-over to change the edges.
- a good blend of inclination and angulation (lateral separation).
- the ability to deal with terrain changes, e.g. being able to carve over a roller or into a compression/undulation without skidding or losing composure.

PISTE PERFORMANCE MIXED TURNS: on steep blue and red piste/terrain

Show

- the ability to ski a **funnel** from medium turns to short turns.
- the ability to ski an **hour glass** from medium to short to medium turns.
- the ability to make **rhythm changes** in one run from long to short turns.

BUMPS: gradient > 25 degrees on natural bump field (not a single bump/rut line)

Show

- a variety of lines in the bumps matching movements to terrain prioritizing smoothness and agility over strength and power.
- continuous linked turns in the fall line.
- the ability to absorb the bumps (flex and extend the legs) in order to maintain good snow contact.
- the ability to vary the speed of descent whilst skiing the fall line.
- the ability to take air off a bump and land without interrupting the overall flow of the run.



VARIABLE CONDITIONS: off piste including steeper terrain and couloirs

Show

- the ability to perform in a variety of conditions (e.g. powder, heavy snow, slush and ice).
- rounded turns using different arc length to maintain flow and cope with terrain changes.
- turns with a high degree of ski performance (curved not skidded).
- a refined use of fore/aft pressure control with effective posture and balance.
- the ability to use appropriate lateral separation/angulation in order to maintain balance over the outside ski in changeable snow and terrain.
- the ability to keep inside ski tracking and working in varied snow conditions with edges and rotation matched.
- the ability to maintain or increase speed as terrain flattens.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

These activities are an assessed part of the level 4 standards and should be trained before arriving on course.

Show/(Demonstrate to a high level)

- **White pass turns** on piste to demonstrate the ability to start the turn and balance on the inside ski at the start of the turn.
- **dolphin turns** *on piste* to demonstrate effective grasp of fore/aft movement in short turns.
- the ability to do **short jump turns /spiess** *on piste* (landing above the fall line on new edges) to demonstrate effective grasp of edging and pressure in short turns.
- **straight air** over a red jump *in the park* or an **easy trick** off a blue jump *in the park* e.g., grab or 80s style! (but not landing backwards).



NB: Please note that the above “additional activities” are a test of many elements including balance, agility and co-ordination. They are also there to guide students in their training and preparation for the exam.

Candidates are encouraged to train all additional activities to a high standard so they can be demonstrated to the examiner and other students. The examiner will choose a number of these activities as they see fit for the conditions and the group.

As an additional point, candidates should be able to show a progression of activities or steps that lead to the end form performance and should be confident that they could teach this progression during the level 4 teaching course.

EQUIPMENT – for skills development training, exam prep and exam

Required

- **helmets** are required for the entire duration of the course/exam.
- all students are required to have high performance **piste skis** (GS or SL) and be comfortable using them for all tasks and terrain.
- **avalanche safety equipment**; ruck sac, transceiver, shovel & probe.

RESOURCES

- 1) **Irish association of Snowsports Instructors Manual** - iasisnowsports.ie
- 2) **Irish association of Snowsports Instructors outcome standards**- iasisnowsports.ie
- 3) **10 FIS Rules of Conduct for skiers & boarders**
- 4) **Parallel Dreams Alpine Skiing**, 2007 available from Amazon
- 5) **Ski Instructors Handbook – Teaching Tools and Techniques**, 2012 available as ebook from Amazon, iBooks and print version from Parallel Dreams and Amazon
- 6) **Ski Instructors Assistant** by Derek Tate, 2014 available as a free download from Apple iBooks
- 7) **Ski Instructors Handbook – Technical Skills & Drills**, by Andrew Lockerbie, 2011, available in print from Parallel Dreams and Amazon